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Current Events.

The senate on Wednesday passed the Blair pension bill, granting a pension to soldiers of three months' service and over, whenever such suffer from physical disability, upon proper proof being made. The rating being from four dollars to twenty-four per month. A motion to amend by including Mexican veterans was lost by a vote of 23 to 17, and the original bill passed by a vote of 34 yeas to 14 nays. This bill will add \$729,000 to the amount necessary to be expended for pensions if it becomes a law.

The senate now has under consideration a national bankruptcy bill, prepared by Judge Lowell of Mass., and the disposal of the Alabama award fund, which for years has been a constant source of legislation.

A bill has passed the senate providing for the election of a second Vice President, whose duty it shall be to act in case of the disability of both the President and the first Vice President. The position provided by it is purely an honorary one, and the only object in creating it is to make the presidential succession more certain and fixed.

The ocean mail subsidy of \$800,000 was defeated by 98 majority. This result was a great surprise to the leaders on both sides of the question. The subsidy men had conceded that they would be beaten by 20 majority upon the motion to concur in the subsidy amendment, but expected to secure a majority after the question came before the conference committee. That hope is now dashed by the overwhelming majority against them yesterday and the refusal of twenty-eight republicans to vote for the subsidy. Hewitt, of New York, declared that he was opposed to subsidies, yet undertook to break the ranks of the anti-subsidy men, and led in a movement to secure \$460,000 for ocean mail service, which was substantially the same as the subsidy which he voted a year ago, and which the postmaster general refused to expend. The Hewitt straddle met with little favor among democrats, and having been vigorously attacked by Blount of Georgia and Randall it was buried under a majority of fifty-two.

The house committee on the judiciary has decided to report adversely on the various amendments to the constitution, proposing that senators, postmasters and judges shall be elected by the people.

The committee on commerce instructed Chairman Reagan on Thursday to report the enacting clause of the Cullom Interstate commerce bill, with the provisions of the Reagan bill, as an amendment in place of the provisions of the Cullom bill.

The house committee on naval affairs has completed the naval appropriation bill, and it was reported to the house yesterday. The bill appropriates about \$11,000,000, while the estimates submitted by the navy department contemplated an expenditure of \$30,836,357. The appropriation for the current fiscal year is \$15,026,705. The striking discrepancy apparent between the appropriation for the next year and the estimates of the department is explained by the fact that all of the items included in the estimates for new construction, aggregating \$14,816,368, are omitted from the appropriation bill, as they form the substance of the special bill for the new naval establishment already reported by the committee.

The Republican State Central Committee met yesterday at Chicago with a very large attendance of prominent party men from various parts of the state. Gov. Oglesby was present and made a characteristic address, as did also his brother-in-law, Mr. David Littler, of Springfield, who has never yet forgiven Oglesby for his desertion of him at Peoria two years ago. Mr. Littler went out of the way to express his opinion in a very uncomplimentary manner of the Governor. The convention will be held at Springfield, on September 1st, and the last of representation will be as formerly—viz., one delegate for each 400 votes and fraction thereof of 200 or more cast for Blaine in 1884. This ratio will make the total number of delegates 846.

Mr. John Morley, chief secretary for Ireland, moved the second reading of the arms act in the commons on Thursday night, and explained that the act was intended to restrict the possessing, carrying, and importing of arms in a proclaimed district without a license. Although cases of outrage had greatly diminished in number since 1881, it was necessary to prolong the act of that year, he said, in view of the present excited state of party feeling in the north of Ireland. No act could prevent the commission of a deliberately planned murder. The true use of the act was to prevent the growth of the practice of carrying arms on the occasions of markets, processions, and other gatherings. Speeches were also made by Mr. Parnell and Mr.

Bradlaugh in support of the measure. Lord Churchill replying. On the second reading the bill passed by a vote of 303 to 89.

The reaction in favor of the Gladstone home-rule measure has been very gradual, but it has been of such a character as to press victory for the measure. In the houses of the house of commons the leading opponents of the bill admit that some of their followers were known to have secretly promised Mr. Gladstone's managers to withdraw their opposition to the bill. The extent of the movement is not definitely known, but it is believed to be sufficiently important to save the second reading with a majority large enough possibly to render an appeal to the country unnecessary.

The Pull Mall Gazette says that Mr. Chamberlain, by his curt refusal to entertain indirect overtures from Mr. Gladstone, through Baron Herschel, the Lord high chancellor, has closed the door to any chance of reconciliation between himself and Mr. Gladstone.

M. Stephanopoulos was today elected president of the Greek chamber of deputies. He was the nominee of M. Tricoupi, and was elected by a majority of 90 over the candidate supported by M. Delavanis, late minister of war, the vote standing 138 to 78. It is now certain that M. Tricoupi will form a ministry.

The eruption of Mount Etna is increasing in proportions, and there is serious danger to the town of Monte Rosso from the flow of lava. Measures are being taken for the rescue of the inhabitants. Vast columns of flame are issuing from the crater of the volcano, and present a most imposing spectacle.

CONGRESSMAN PLUMB.

The FREE TRADER has received the following communication from Hon. Ralph Plumb:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES U. S.,
WASHINGTON, D. C., May 18, 1886.
J. H. ECKELS, Esq.,—Dear Sir:—Upon reading sundry editorial paragraphs in the Ottawa Free Trader, of the 8th inst., relating to myself, and which were derogatory in a high degree to my character, I addressed a letter to Mr. Osman who, as I supposed, was responsible for whatever might be published in the paper alluded to, and in reply was informed that the position of editor had been assumed by yourself, hence this communication.

I write you on the presumption that had you known all of the facts as shown by the evidence furnished to the Senate Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads respecting the alleged complicity of M. J. Finlen in obtaining unlawfully public lands in Nebraska, you would not have published the offensive article to which allusion is made, and now desiring as I do to avoid if possible all personal conflict, I conclude that it is but fair to furnish you copies of such evidence, with a request that you give the same a careful and candid examination. This done, if you are satisfied that I have acted honorably in the premises, and that you have done me injustice, you will, I am sure, be glad to say so as publicly as you have assailed me. If, however, you are not convinced, I ask you to publish in the FREE TRADER the affidavits furnished you herewith, so that your readers may have an opportunity to judge for themselves.

Awaiting the action you take I am,
Very respectfully,
RALPH PLUMB.

Prior to the receipt of this communication we had learned through other sources that our editorial of the 8th inst. was regarded as doing Mr. Plumb injustice in respect to the Streater postoffice controversy. We should exceedingly regret to be considered unjust to any public officer, and none the less so because he is a member of the opposite political party, and shall always be found ready and willing to correct any misstatements, when their inaccuracy is called to our attention.

We are glad, therefore, to do Mr. Plumb the justice to say that so far as his conduct of the case against Mr. Finlen before the committee is concerned, there is nothing of which just complaint could be made, and so far as the objectionable article could be construed as criticising him in that respect, it would do him injustice.

As we are informed both by Mr. Heenan and by Mr. Harmon, who argued the case before the committee, and whose views are expressed in an interview published in another column, all the statements made by Mr. Plumb to the committee of matters within his own personal knowledge, were straightforward and correct. Though opposing the confirmation of Mr. Finlen, he nevertheless, in answering questions propounded to him before the committee, and through volunteer statements, testified to the good character and standing of Mr. Finlen, Mr. Heenan, and all the members of the firm of D. Heenan & Co., and of all their clerks who could in any wise have been concerned in or cognizant of the alleged fraudulent land transaction, and whose affidavits were before the committee to rebut the charge of fraudulent conduct made against Mr. Finlen. In this respect, then, his conduct was commendable.

But there are other circumstances to be taken into account aside from Mr. Plumb's mere presentation of the case to the committee. The charge made against Mr. Finlen was a serious one, one that involved his character and reputation, and one in which an adverse decision even by a partisan tribunal, would have done him an irreparable injury. The charge also involved the character and reputation of the other members of the firm of D. Heenan & Co., and had it been sustained, would have injuriously affected them. Under these circumstances, while it would have been proper for Mr. Plumb to have prosecuted the charge against Mr. Finlen, if known to him to be well founded, it was not his duty to do so upon the strength of affidavits made by irresponsible parties, unless he was unaware of the character of those parties, or believed the evidence to be sufficient to warrant its presentation to the committee. It is undoubtedly the duty of a member of Congress to present a case made against an appointee, but in doing so, he owes it to the party as well as to the public to exercise caution against injustice.

This whole controversy over the Streater postoffice is one to be regretted. Its importance, as a political question is slight, but it has been the means of creating enmities and ill feelings out of all proportion to the magnitude of the interests involved, and probably the sooner it is ended and forgotten, the better it will be for all parties concerned. It has been a fruitful theme for the comments of the Republican newspapers, which have with but one exception, uniformly misrepresented the facts.

But the facts have been determined fairly and impartially by the proper committee in favor of Mr. Finlen, and that ought to end the controversy. We have no personal interest in the matter, nor do we seek a personal conflict with Mr. Plumb, but shall always reserve the right to criticise his official conduct, when in our judgment the public good demands it. And we will say in this connection that when Mr. Plumb ceases to put obstacles in the way of Mr. Finlen's confirmation, he will take a good step in the way of removing the occasion for questioning the motives that have actuated him in the transaction.

Mr. Plumb has not furnished us with the copy of the evidence mentioned in his letter, but that is unnecessary, as we are well acquainted with it. Furthermore, as it has been rejected as insufficient by the committee after a full and fair hearing, its publication would accomplish no good.

GOOD MAY COME OF IT.

The revelations brought about by the investigation of the Broadway railway steal in New York City, and the conviction of Alderman Jaehne of the crime of accepting a bribe, ought to have a very salutary effect. For some years there has been a growing tendency in large cities to utterly disregard the qualifications and personal integrity of those who present themselves as candidates for aldermanic honors, and as a result the very worst men in the wards are given complete control of the city's fiscal affairs.

It is difficult to assign any rational explanation of the fact, every where observable, that those most affected by good or bad city legislation are the most indifferent to the kind of men who compose the average large city's council. As a rule it will be found that the property interests of the wards are seldom represented in municipal legislative halls, but in their stead interests that grow rich through barter and sale of aldermanic influence. Consequently upon this state of affairs, and as the legitimate outgrowth of it, are the scandals that so frequently attach to the official acts of those who hold these places of public trust. It is utterly impossible to have good legislation if those who legislate are men of bad character and corrupt motives, and the sooner the best elements of the people realize and act upon this theory, the sooner will there be less of corruption among men in public places.

There is now and always has been too much indifference on the part of strictly business men to affairs of a political character, though they are always ready to complain if the public's interests are not properly attended to. Let the business men of the country hereafter give as much heed to furthering the good of the public as they do to advancing their own private interests, and they will soon realize that in serving the public good they have materially advanced their own interests. The pursuing of such a course will, at least, save the country from a repetition of the scene so recently enacted in New York.

AN INTERVIEW.

On Thursday the editor of the FREE TRADER received a letter from Hon. Ralph Plumb, which is published elsewhere, relative to the Streater postoffice controversy, and yesterday meeting with Mr. Lawrence Harmon, of Peoria, who was in attendance upon the Appellate Court, and who represented Mr. Finlen before the Senate Postoffice committee, had the following interview with him. It is the desire of the editor of the FREE TRADER to say that which is the simple truth, and prefatory to Mr. Harmon's interview, he desires to state that the statements made in a recent editorial that appeared in a recent issue relative to Mr. Plumb's action in the case before the committee, were founded upon dispatches contained in the morning papers of the morning after the arguments of Mr. Plumb and Mr. Harmon were made.

Those statements were incorrect and misleading, and in justice to Mr. Plumb the interview with Mr. Harmon is published: "Please state Mr. Harmon what was the position taken by Mr. Plumb before the Senate committee on Post Offices and Post Roads in the Finlen case?" "I will state in the first place that I became acquainted with Col. Plumb a few days prior to the hearing before that committee, which was had on Friday, April 30, 1886. Upon the occasion of one of my conversations with Col. Plumb prior to the hearing, he disclaimed all personal feeling and interest in the matter, and said all he cared to do before the committee was to present the facts as he understood them, and would present as fully Mr. Finlen's side of the case as he would the case against him.

"On the day of the hearing Col. Plumb was heard first, and before the committee voluntarily stated that he had no interest in the matter; that Mr. Finlen's standing at his home in Streater was the very best; that he and Mr. Heenan and Mr. Flanagan, composing the firm of D. Heenan & Co., of Streater, were each men of irreproachable character in the neighborhood where they lived; Col. Plumb also added that he was free to say that there was not in all the testimony any direct proof of Mr.

Finlen's alleged connection with land frauds, and all he wanted was to present the case fairly to the committee. In my reply to Col. Plumb in addressing the committee, I stated that whilst conceding to Col. Plumb his right to give his view as to what the testimony proved, and without in any way impugning his motives, I was compelled to differ from the conclusions that he drew from the testimony which was all before the committee. Permit me to add right here that the reports as published in the Chicago papers as to what was actually said by Col. Plumb and myself before the committee were none of them correct. I am not surprised, consequently, that your people derived from such accounts erroneous impressions of the course of Col. Plumb before the committee. So far as I know of Col. Plumb's connection with this case, and his presentation of it before the committee, whilst conceding the fairness with which he presented it, I claimed that the gentleman was mistaken in his judgment as to what the evidence proved. Mr. D. Heenan was also present at the hearing before the committee, and I am sure will verify the statements I make as to what actually occurred there.

"I should say here that each and every member of the committee, not only the Democrats but the Republican members of the committee, have treated this case with the most considerate fairness and impartiality.

"Now, that the committee have, by their unanimous report, sustained the view of its case maintained by Mr. Finlen, it seems to me its time to say, 'Let us have peace.'"

HONESTY PREVAILS.

By a vote of 178 yeas to 80 nays the house has refused to concur in the senate amendment to the postoffice appropriation bill, giving the sum of \$800,000 for foreign mail service, mainly for the benefit of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. The amendment to the bill made by the senate was placed upon the grounds that the appropriation provided by it would materially assist in building up the commerce of the United States with the Pacific countries, a claim as absurd as it was dishonest.

There was nothing more or less intended by the proposed appropriation than giving a subsidy to a steamship company that has already grown rich out of the government, through contracts to carry mails at prices utterly beyond the value of the services rendered. It was to maintain such prices that the lobbies at the capitol have been crowded with the paid agents of the company who have done nothing but urge congress to vote a benefit to the company, under the mask of aiding the commerce of the country. The claim that the mails could not be properly handled and expedited without the additional \$800,000 voted by the senate was at no time urged, because the Postmaster General had already demonstrated that such was not the case. At no time have the Pacific mails been so quickly transported as at present, and yet it is done without the aid of any subsidy whatsoever.

If the republican senators who conceived this new and brilliant scheme for assisting American commerce and the republican members of the house who so eagerly supported it, really desire to further the people's commercial interests with their foreign brethren, they can do so more readily and more honestly than by voting dishonest subsidies to dishonest companies. By joining the tariff reform democrats in the house in reviving the country's present iniquitous revenue system, so as to make it possible for the American people to have markets other than their own for American manufactured goods, they can readily solve the difficulty which at present seems to worry them.

The overwhelming defeat of the senate's subsidy scheme in the house indicates that the day of voting gifts outright to rich corporations by the people's representatives has gone by.

A POLITICAL MEASURE.

The Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. Blair, is very much given to the introduction of great appropriation bills in the Senate. Not content with having secured the passage of a bill appropriating seventy-seven millions of dollars for the education of illiterates, he has just witnessed the passage by his fellow Senators of another of his measures which, if it ever becomes a law, will necessitate an expenditure of treble the amount of money required to meet the demands of his educational act. This latest effort on his part is a pension bill which provides: "That every person specified in the several classes enumerated in Section 4993 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and the amendments thereto, who served in the military or naval service, as mentioned in said section, for the period of three months during the rebellion, and has an honorable discharge therefrom, and who is or shall become disabled from any cause not the result of his own fault, and shall also be dependent upon contributions of others not legally bound thereto, shall, on making proper proof, receive a pension during such disability of from four to twenty-four dollars per month."

That Senator Blair's bill is uncalled for is apparent to every one who has ever taken the trouble to examine the provisions of our present pension laws. At present every step has been taken by the government to compensate those who served the country in its time of distress, that justice or reason demanded. Certainly enough has been done to satisfy the soldier that the people of the country are neither ungrateful nor ungenerous. It is not noticeable that they are crying out for any sub-

relief as Mr. Blair proposes to give them, and until they at least call upon Congress to take such a step, the matter ought not to be hurried.

The truth is, however, that such measures as the Senate has just enacted secure a place upon the statute book through the efforts of those who have but one object in view, and that the securing of themselves for purely political purposes the support of the soldier elements of the community, and as a means of doing this, indiscriminate raids are made upon the public treasury at each session of Congress under the cloak of an unselfish generosity. Already the amount appropriated each year to meet the pension rolls of the country amounts to many millions of dollars, and the uncalled for attempt to so greatly increase it, is nothing short of robbery.

Mr. Blair's bill will now go to the House, and if it does not find its quietus in the Pension Committee room, as did his absurd educational measure, it ought to be defeated upon the floor.

If, unfortunately, it should pass the House, the President will fail to do his duty if he does not interpose his veto.

The May grand jury for Cook county was completed Monday. Judge Rogers charged its members that no public speaker had a right to advise murder or arson, and he could be held responsible for the result of incendiary language. Bail in the sum of \$5,000 was furnished for Chris Spies, one of the anarchist gang, and he was set at liberty. Officer Redden, who died on Sunday last at the county hospital, is the sixth policeman murdered by the Lomb on Haymarket square.

The labor difficulties of the past few weeks have steadily drawn to a close, and on every hand there are signs of returning business prosperity. In Chicago the majority of the strikers have returned to their labors, and the Anarchists have ceased to be a dangerous element.

Mrs. George H. Pendleton, wife of the present Minister to Germany, was thrown from her carriage in Central Park, New York, Thursday, and killed.

The Gossiper.



My feet are weary and my hands are tired,
My soul oppressed—
And I desire, what I have long desired—
Rest—only rest.

The burden of my days is hard to bear,
But God knows best;
And I have prayed, but vain has been my prayer,
For rest—sweet rest.

'Tis hard to plant in spring and never reap
The autumn yield;
'Tis hard to till, and when 'tis tilled to weep
O'er fruitless field.

And so I cry a weak and human cry,
So heart oppressed;
And so I sigh a weak and human sigh,
For rest—for rest.

My way lies wound across the desert years,
And cares infest
My path, and through the flowing of hot tears,
I pine for rest.

And I am restless still; 'twill soon be o'er,
For down the west
Life's sun is setting, and I see the shore
Where I shall rest.

—Father Ryan.

Hen. William M. Springer has again been nominated by acclamation by the democrats as their candidate for congress in the Springfield district. Mr. Springer has now served his constituents for several terms and in such a manner as to make him personally very popular with them. His great forte is his willingness to render a favor to either democrat or republican whenever it is within his power to do so. There is no member of congress who is so persistent in his efforts as is Mr. Springer, and as a result he is in the majority of instances successful in his undertakings. He is pleasant in address and affable in manner. The repeated efforts made in his district to defeat him for renomination have thus far proven unsuccessful and it is very probable they will continue to do so as long as Mr. Springer retains his hold upon the masses of the people of his district.

Rutherford B. Hayes, who will be remembered as having drawn the salary of Hon. Samuel J. Tilden as President for four years, has again brought himself before the people through an article written by him and published in the Brooklyn Sunday Magazine upon the subject, "Popular Education." Mr. Hayes is at present engaged in the honest, if not very ambitious, employment of raising a superior breed of chickens at Freemont, Ohio, and were it not that he now and then takes a prize at the county fairs in Ohio on his poultry exhibits, he would scarcely receive a thought from the American people. He is one of those individuals who could well be dispensed with "for he never would be missed." His administration of public affairs was characterized by but two sweeping reforms. One was the introduction of a superior quality of crab apple cider at state banquets in lieu of wine, and the other the singing of good old-fashioned hymns at the White House on Sabbath evenings to the exclusion of zealous political workers. Both these laudable innovations were really due more to the strenuous efforts of his good wife Lucy Webb, who brought to the Executive Mansion all the primitive habits of the "Western Reserve," though they have always been credited to Rutherford B.

A paper bearing the attractive title of Cupid's Quiver has been received at this office.

It is devoted, according to its leading editorial, to furthering matrimonial ventures, and in furthering them it monthly publishes advertisements of matrimonially inclined ladies and gentlemen. In this issue the following appears:

R22.—Noble young English lady, aged 22 years, now residing in La Salle county, Illinois, a beautiful brunette, fine figure, wishes to correspond with an honorable young man of good character, industrious, money no object.

It is to be hoped that some gallant young man of the county will relieve the distress from which this "noble young English lady" is apparently suffering. It is certainly to be regretted that anyone of so fine a figure and so beautiful a face should be compelled to publish her lack of attention to the world. For the credit of the county let some young man seek her out and prevent it from further becoming known that the county's young ladies are not properly looked after.

When Senator Cullom's Inter-State Commerce bill was before the senate on Wednesday some senator offered an amendment to it providing that railroads be prohibited from issuing free passes to public officials. It is needless to say that the amendment met a very speedy rejection. It will now be in order for some of the eminent statesmen, who indignantly denied that any corrupt purpose could be intended by a railway corporation in giving legislators free passes, to explain just why men, when public servants, are granted privileges by such corporations that are not extended to them when they are plain citizens without the power to enact laws that might affect railway interests. Some better reason must be given than simply saying it is but a courtesy shown to the positions they occupy. The people are coming to the conclusion that corporations seldom grant courtesies without expecting that they will be reciprocated.

Senator Ray, of Morris, at the republican love feast held at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Chicago on Thursday, announced, amidst loud applause, "that the people of the 8th district would return not only the republican candidate for congress, but would increase the republican majority one in each branch of the legislature."

It is to be hoped that Senator Ray is not building hopes on accomplishing anything in this country. If he is he will sadly be disappointed when election day comes round. La Salle county is quite as reliably democratic on an "off" year as it is in a presidential contest, and Senator Ray should know this. It may be put down as a certainty that the next senator and representatives in the Illinois legislature from La Salle county will be of the democratic faith.

The eloquent colored divine, Rev. Charles M. Smith, of Bloomington, who was so conspicuous in the preliminary meeting of the republicans of the state two years since, was conspicuous by his absence from their state meeting on Thursday. Since the Rev. Smith's conversion to "mug-wumpism" and his refusal to support Mr. Blaine, he has not been looked upon by his late admirers as much of a fellow after all, and his brilliant rhetoric, which erstwhile thrilled republican hearts and fired them to the most ardent point of patriotic zeal, since then has been regarded as very school-boyish oratory. The only expounder of the divine word who participated in "Long" Jones' late school of discipline, was the Rev. Dr. Edwards, of Princeton, a far to able and upright gentleman to be under the tutelage of the ex-republican United States marshal. Dr. Edwards, however, will hardly take a conspicuous part in the ensuing campaign as it is very probable the republicans will hereafter suppress their clerical supporters. Their late experience in using them as an annex to Mr. Blaine's hippodrome was not such a huge success as to warrant a repetition of the undertaking.

The announcement is now made by enthusiastic supporters of Mr. Blaine that his success in the next presidential campaign is assured if he can but secure the nomination. They state that he is a Knight of Labor and that the various assemblies of the country would rally about his standard. This is the most detrimental statement that has yet been made against Mr. Powderly's men, and so absurd is it that it is not worth giving credence to. Mr. Blaine has acquired a good deal of property during his "twenty years in congress," but it is due more to his style of discharging the duties of his official positions than through any manual or mental labors performed by him. Mr. Blaine heretofore has been content to be looked upon as the "plumed knight." He overreaches the mark when he now presents himself as a laboring knight.

The Mikado.
At last the "rage" of the musical season in other parts of the country is announced for production in Ottawa. It is just as well that it has been long coming, for the Chicago Opera House company is one of the very best on the road, and in the "Mikado" are probably unsurpassed by any company, so that we shall see it at its best.

The opera will be given on next Thursday evening, with John E. McWade as The Mikado; Chas. T. Barnes as Nanki-Poo; Stanley Felch as Ko-Ko, the original in this country; J. T. Allison as Pooch-Bah, original in this country; Miss Lottie Cruikshank as Katisha; and Misses Ada Somers, Alice Becktel and Eloise Willard as Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo. There will be an orchestra and chorus, of course.

The "Mikado" is perhaps the best of the series of comic operas by Gilbert & Sullivan, which have for the past few years convulsed the English speaking public with their fun and charmed their ears with delicious music,—a series which has given the lie to the old theory of the Offenbachian school